



**1109th meeting of the
Pacific Coast Numismatic Society**
7:30PM Wednesday September 24, 2008
Building C, Fort Mason
San Francisco, California

Henry Meiggs

Michael Wehner

Pacific Coast Numismatic Society
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Please join us Wednesday, September 24, 2008 to hear *Michael Wehner* tell you about Henry Meiggs and a famous San Francisco attraction. You have to come to find out more.

1108th meeting, The Almost Presidents *Herb Miles* (reported by *Herb Miles*)

Herb presented a PowerPoint slide show (and somehow was able to take minutes simultaneously) on those individuals who ran for the highest office in the land but were fortunate enough not to gain the headache, "The Almost Presidents." Since there have been 43 presidents, there have been a number of almos, but I will not enumerate them here as that would be too dull. Suffice it to say that the most recent victims have been the most interesting as those events occurred within our lifetime and memory, Mr. Mondale, Mr. Perot, Mr. Dukakis, Mr. Gore, Mr. Kerry, and, of course, this year we shall add one other, either Mr. Obama or Mr. McCain.

Earlier victims included the historical Aaron Burr, Henry Clay, Stephen Douglas, Winfield Scott, and Daniel Webster. Even Horace Greeley ran for president as did John C Fremont of California. One feature of winning the presidency that I probably got wrong or at least brought confusion to everyone at the meeting is the voting in the Electoral College.

Since the beginning of the US, the president has been chosen by the Electoral College, G Washington was chosen with 69 electoral votes in the first election, second place finisher John Adams became the vice president. For a number of years, that is the way the system functioned, with the winner needing a designated number of votes to win the presidency, then the vice presidency went to the #2 finisher. Electors, chosen by the parties currently, but in prior years by the legislature of the states, total the number of Senators and Representatives of the various states (currently 538 with Washington, DC's 3 electors included). Neither a senator nor a representative can be an elector; this function is performed usually by a party faithful.

Several elections have shown the fragility of the original system where the electors cast two votes for president, i.e., the 1800 Jefferson-Burr tie (73 votes each), where it took 36 House votes before Alexander Hamilton (who hated Burr) threw his support to Jefferson. Other elections have ended in dispute as well; the Andrew Jackson 1824 election where he received the most electoral votes, but

not a majority thus the election was thrown into the House of Representatives and John Quincy Adams won instead of Jackson!

The key is to win a "majority of electors" (now 270 of 538) so if a third party polls strongly and garners a number of electoral votes, a majority may not be possible between the two major candidates; Lincoln's candidacy in 1860 came very close as he won 180 electors of 303 possible and the other candidates won as follows, Stephen Douglas-12, John Bell-39, John C Breckenridge-72. Even if the other candidates had been on person, they still would not have taken the presidency as Lincoln had more than 50% of all electors, a majority.

August 2008 Exhibits

Scott brought some more magnificent pieces; a Mexico 1751 ½ Real slabbed as NGC 63, a Belgain Congo 1906 20 Centimes slabbed by PCGS as MS 67, and a pattern 1930 Belgina Congo 1 Franc in silver (regular issues come in copper-nickel).

Steve brought his latest acquisition, a Ptolemaic bronze, but a barbarous imitation minted during a revolt against one of the Ptolemy kings, IV or V, I cannot remember, but this coin is the only tangible evidence that such a revolting ruler existed as no other historical record even mentions him!

Gordon, recent recipient of the ANA's Medal of Merit (you go Gord!) brought his recent raffle prize, a 1924 \$20 dollar gold piece, you know he never wins, don't you? And a \$20 dollar bill with the last two serial numbers offset a bit from the others, first time he had seen such a thing.

Whalen exhibited and passed around some Canadian commemoratives and the regular circulating coins that were represented by the commems and a Canadian silver dollar of 2001 commemorating the 1911 never issued dollar.

Jerry brought 3 silver certificates for which he was seeking information; a Hawaiian World War II issue, a large size silver, and a regular blue seal silver cert. Apparently Jerry gained very little information for the membership.

Catz brought a 1960s reproduction of the 1915 PPIE map of San Francisco and the exposition grounds.

Mark showed off a slabbed US Library of Congress bimetallic (platinum & gold) MS 69 coin, a slabbed Mexico Peso from 1918 and some Tibetan coins which he had for sale.

Herb exhibited three supposed "clips" or incomplete planchets coins, a buffalo nickel, a Mercury dime and a state quarter, all doctored after leaving the Mint.

August 2008 Raffle (raised \$39)

- 1) Ed won a George Washington ½ dollar proof commemorative from 1982.
- 2) Catz took home a nice book on medallic art, entitled "The Medal."
- 3) Another book on US Paper Money by Schwartz & Lindquist went to Gordon (who never wins)
- 4) A Large 1929 "Penny" featuring Union Station in Kansas City went to Jerry
- 5) An American Numismatic Association "bag" with the remains of the raffle tickets went home with Whalen and Sandra (enjoy!).

2008 Papers Contest Results

The results of the 2008 papers contests are now in:

1st place: *Michael Wehner* "California Gold Rush "Bills of Exchange"

2nd place: *Elliot Wehner* "Coinage in Transition: the mechanization of the minting process in England"

Honorable Mention:

Daniel Feldman "The Athenian Owl"

Jerry F. Schimmel. "Anguila Coinage"

These four papers will be published with two papers from the 2007 contest. Thanks to Steve and Ed for all their efforts to put the publication together!

Now is the time to start writing your articles for the 2009 PCNS papers contest!